

CLAIMS

The Listing of Claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the subject application.

1. (Currently amended) A method for cleaning and sterilizing a medical device comprising:

placing the device into a container;

cleaning the device in the container with a cleaning solution;

rinsing the device in the container with a rinse solution;

vaporizing a liquid substance in the container to create a sterilant vapor, wherein the liquid substance comprises a retained portion of the rinse solution; and

contacting the device with the vapor to effect sterilization of the device.

2. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 further comprising storing the device in the container in sterile form.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein the rinse solution comprises a chemical sterilant.

5. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 4 wherein the chemical sterilant comprises hydrogen peroxide.

6. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein the liquid substance comprises a chemical sterilant.

7. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 6 wherein the chemical sterilant comprises hydrogen peroxide.

8. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 and further comprising introducing the liquid substance as a mist.

9. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising retaining a predetermined amount of the liquid substance in the container prior to the vaporizing.

10. (Currently amended) A method for cleaning and sterilizing a medical device comprising:

placing the device into a container;

cleaning the device in the container with a cleaning solution;

rinsing the device in the container with a rinse solution;

retaining a predetermined amount of a liquid substance in the container, wherein the liquid substance comprises a retained portion of the rinse solution;

vaporizing the liquid substance in the container to create a vapor; and contacting the device with the vapor to effect sterilization of the device.

11. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 10 wherein the rinse solution comprises a chemical sterilant.

12. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 11 wherein the chemical sterilant comprises hydrogen peroxide.

13. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 10 wherein the liquid substance comprises a chemical sterilant.

14. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 13 wherein the chemical sterilant comprises hydrogen peroxide.

15. (Previously presented) A method for cleaning and sterilizing a medical device comprising:

placing the device into a container;

cleaning the device in the container with a cleaning solution;

rinsing the device in the container with a rinse solution;

retaining a portion of a liquid substance in the container, wherein the liquid substance comprises at least a portion of the rinse solution;

vaporizing the liquid substance in the container to create a sterilant vapor; and

contacting the device with the vapor to effect sterilization of the device.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 15 wherein the rinse solution comprises a chemical sterilant.

18. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 17 wherein the chemical sterilant of the rinse solution comprises hydrogen peroxide.

19. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein at least a portion of the liquid substance comprises water.

20. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 15, wherein at least a portion of the liquid substance comprises water.